



New Jersey Meadowlands Commission **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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September 19, 2006

Summit Convened on Meadowlands Economy

First steps taken on new programs for small business development, generation of a renewable energy sector, better transit opportunities and an accelerated flood management

LYNDHURST, N.J. – The New Jersey Meadowlands Commission, along with leaders in government, academia, business and the environment, today discussed an agenda of sustainable growth in key sectors for the Meadowlands District during the Second Annual Meadowlands Economic Summit.

The Summit, sponsored by the NJMC, the Meadowlands Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Institute for Meadowlands Studies at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers University, examined what has been done thus far to make this region a major contributor to the economy of the State of New Jersey, as well as mapped out new opportunities to expand and manage growth.


"Under Governor Corzine's leadership we are working toward a vibrant future for the Meadowlands, one that focuses on both the economic and environmental aspects of this complex region," said NJMC Chair Susan Bass Levin, also Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs. "Our economy in the District has never been stronger, and the environment continues to rebound. Now is the time to work together, as entrepreneurs, legislators, community leaders, environmental advocates and economists, to understand and foster the continued sustainable growth."

Bass Levin, the event's keynote speaker, outlined three key initiatives for the Meadowlands District. She directed that internal circulation and transportation within the Meadowlands District be improved – paying special attention to mass transit – in order to meet the increasing number of jobs expected to come to the Meadowlands over the next 30 years. She also called for Rutgers University to expedite its study of a stormwater utility in the Meadowlands District in order to create a comprehensive mechanism to address declining flood prevention structures in the District. Finally, the Chairwoman authorized an analysis on establishing a small business incubator in the Meadowlands – emphasizing renewable energy work – to foster innovation.

Anthony R. Coscia, the Chairman of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, was the Summit's featured speaker.

"As we move forward in building a transportation infrastructure that supports our region's growth, the Port Authority recognizes the important role the Meadowlands plays. Both because of its strategic location near the urban centers that people are returning to, and its natural resources and assets, the Meadowlands must be a vital part of a flourishing region," Coscia said.

Five panels addressed critical economic issues and trends affecting the Meadowlands region, the state in its entirety, as well as the nation. Topics included, "An Economic Forecast for the State and



Nation," "Jobs, Creating Opportunities," "Destination Meadowlands, Marketing a Region," "Ecotourism, Synergy Between Preservation and Business," and "Renewable Energy, An Epicenter for Innovation and Growth."

Panelists included James Orr of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, Richard Lemieux of Ernst and Young, Jeffrey Wootan of Solar Design Associates, David Listokin, James W. Hughes, Joseph Seneca, Michael Lahr, Nancy Mantell, Frank Felder and Dan Benson of Rutgers University, Bergen County Workforce Investment Board Executive Director Tammy Molinelli and Hudson County Workforce Investment Board Executive Director Anthony Corsi.

Virginia Bauer, CEO and Secretary of the New Jersey Commerce, Economic Growth & Tourism Commission and David Socolow, Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, along with other experts discussed job growth and connecting employers and the workforce.

"Governor Corzine's comprehensive Economic Growth Strategy is designed to grow the economy and create well-paying private sector jobs," Bauer said. "The plan puts New Jersey on a path to future success ensuring that businesses, whether in the Meadowlands region or in the southernmost part of the state, can make long-term plans and increase job opportunities for our citizens."

"Developing New Jersey's world-class workforce is a vital part of Governor Corzine's Economic Growth Strategy," Socolow said. "As part of this strategy, the Department of Labor and Workforce Development has dedicated State resources to competitively award High-Growth Workforce Investment Grants for individual businesses or industry consortia to invest in upgrading the skills of their workers. This investment in our workforce will help keep businesses in high-growth, high-wage industry sectors competitive in the global economy and growing in New Jersey. The initial competition will be for training grants to businesses and business groups in sectors such as Pharmaceuticals and Biotechnology; Science and Technology; Information Technology; Logistics; Energy; Finance, and Hospitality and Tourism." For more information, please visit the web site at www.nj.gov/labor/press/2006/0907WorkforceGrowth.htm.

Meadowlands Regional Chamber of Commerce CEO James Kirkos, New Jersey Office of Travel and Tourism Executive Director Nancy Byrne and New Jersey Sports and Exposition Chairman Carl Goldberg discussed marketing the Meadowlands, an initiative already underway through the efforts of the Meadowlands Liberty Convention and Visitors' Bureau – with substantial funding from the NJMC – and events such as Meadowfest, attended by more than 10,000 visitors earlier this year.

New Jersey Audubon Vice President Eric Stiles, NY/NJ Baykeeper Executive Director Andrew Willner and Hackensack Riverkeeper Bill Sheehan discussed the symbiosis of eco-tourism and business in the region, most recently spurred by the NJMC's release of "Birding and Wildlife Trails: Meadowlands and More," a 72-page, full color guide with information on trails, parks, catch-and-release fishing, boating and canoeing, and places to stay in the Meadowlands.

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